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SUNDAY SCHOOLS

CHARLES FOSTER KENT

BOSTON

THE
ORGANIZING AND
BUILDING OF
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

NEW YORK: HENRY HOLT & CO., 1907

Sunday schools -
Organization and
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MODERN SUNDAY SCHOOL MANUALS

Edited by Charles Foster Kent in
Collaboration with John T. McFarland

ORGANIZING AND BUILDING UP THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

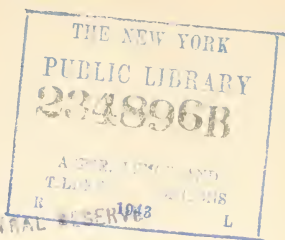
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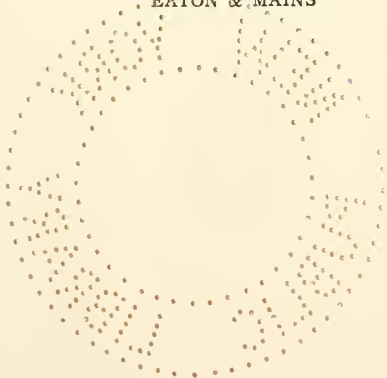
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PREFATORY

IN the preparation of this volume the purpose was to supply a convenient handbook upon the organization, the management, and the recruiting of the Sunday school, to be read by those desiring information upon these subjects. But after the larger part of the work had been prepared a desire was expressed that the method of treatment be so modified that the volume might be employed as a text-book for classes and individual students in the department of teacher-training. It has been the aim of the author not to alter the work so materially as to render it unfitting for the general reader; and with this in view the series of blackboard outlines for the teacher, and the questions for the testing of the student's knowledge, have been placed at the end of the book. In the hope that both the reader and the student may receive profit from these pages the book is committed to the public.

JESSE LYMAN HURLBUT.

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I

THE HISTORIC PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL MOVEMENT

1. **Magnitude of the Sunday-School Movement.**

At the opening of the twentieth century the Sunday school stands forth as one of the largest, most widely spread, most characteristic, and most influential institutions of the Anglo-Saxon world. Wherever the English race is found the Sunday school is established, in the Mother isle, on the American continent, at the Cape of Good Hope, and in Australasia. In the United States and Canada it has a following of fourteen million members, representing every religious denomination. Its periodical literature has a wider circulation than that of any other modern educational movement. It touches every class of society, from the highest to the lowest; and its largest membership is found among the young, who are of all ages, the most susceptible to formative forces. It is safe to say that this institution has exerted a powerful influence upon the majority of the men and women of to-day, and is now shaping the character of millions who will be the men and women of to-morrow.

2. **A Modern Movement.** Great as it appears in our time, the Sunday school is comparatively a modern institution. Undoubtedly, the germ of it can be traced back to that source of all the religious life of the civilized world, the Hebrew people.

The elemental principle of the Sunday school is possibly to be found in the prophetic guilds before the Exile, and the schools of the Jewish scribes after the Restoration. The great Bible class of Ezra (Neh. 8) was not unlike a modern Sunday school. Yet as an organized institution the Sunday school began with Robert Raikes, the philanthropist of Gloucester, England, who on one Sunday in 1780 called together a group of street boys in a room on Sooty Alley, and employed young women to teach them the rudiments of reading and religion. If Raikes had not happened to be the editor of the town newspaper, and in constant need of copy, his Sunday school might soon have been forgotten. But from time to time he published concerning it paragraphs which were copied into other papers and attracted attention, so that the Sooty Alley Sunday school became the parent of a vast progeny throughout the United Kingdom and beyond the seas. No institution then in existence, or recorded in church history, suggested to Robert Raikes either the name or the plan. Both arose out of his own good heart and active mind. But since his day both the name "Sunday school" and its plan of working have been perpetuated, and every Sunday school in the world is a monument to Robert Raikes, the editor of Gloucester.

3. A Lay Movement. It is a significant fact that the first Sunday school was established not by a priest, but by a private member of the Church of England, that its earliest teachers were not curates, nor sisters, but young women of the laity, and that throughout its history the move-

ment has been directed and carried forward, in all lands and among nearly all denominations, by lay workers.¹ This is noteworthy, because in the eighteenth century, far more than in our time, the teaching of religion was regarded as the peculiar function of the clergy, and lay preaching was frowned upon as irregular. The earliest Sunday school may have been preserved from churchly opposition by its own insignificance; or it may have won the favor of the clergy by the fact that all its pupils at the close of the morning session were regularly marched to church. Whatever the cause may have been, it is certain that under a providence which we must regard as divine, both in its beginning and throughout its history, the Sunday school, although a laymen's movement, has received favor, and not opposition, from the clergy and the Church.

4. **Unpaid Workers.** It has been stated that Raikes paid the young women who taught in his Sunday school a penny for each Sunday. But as the movement went onward the conductors and teachers were soon giving their service freely; and this has been the prevailing rule throughout the world. There are a few Sunday schools wherein a curate or assistant pastor is the superintendent, and a few mission schools that employ a salaried teacher who works through the week as a visitor; but it may be asserted that the world-wide army of Sunday-school workers lay upon the altar of the Church their free-hearted, unpaid offering of time, study, and effort. This has been and is a

¹ An exception is to be noted in the Sunday schools of the Roman Catholic Church, where most of the teachers belong to religious orders.

noble, a self-denying, a splendid service; but it has also been a potent element in the progress of the movement. Those who would establish a school, alike in the city and on the frontier, have not been compelled to wait until funds could be raised for the salary of a superintendent and teachers. If only churches rich enough to pay for workers had established Sunday schools in our country, the Sunday school as an institution would not have advanced westward with the wave of population. And not only has the unpaid service aided the growth of the movement, it has also added to its moral and religious power. The pupils and their parents have recognized that the teachers were working not for pay, but from love for their scholars and their Saviour; and that love has imparted to their message a power all its own.

5. Self-supporting. The Sunday school has been from the beginning and even now remains in large measure a self-supporting movement. It everywhere involves expense for furniture, for teaching requisites, for song books, for libraries; but for the most part the money to meet these expenses has been contributed in the school, among its own members, and not by the church. Instances are on record, even, where the church, in former times, charged and received rent for the use of its property by the Sunday school! Such short-sighted practice has been rare, but multitudes of churches have found the Sunday school a source of far greater profit than expense. In other words, those who have done the work of the school have also paid its bills, and many families that have received its benefits have been exempt from its burdens.

It is noteworthy, however, that this condition is passing away, that churches are awakening to their responsibility and opportunity, and are giving to the Sunday school that liberal support which its work requires and deserves. In the ratio of investment and return, no department of the church costs so little and rewards so richly as an efficient Sunday school.

6. Self-governing. As a result of being self-supporting, the Sunday school has also been a self-governing institution. Paying its own way and asking no favor, it has been almost everywhere an independent body, accepting no outside authority. It has grown up almost unrecognized and unnoticed by the churches. Fifty years ago scarcely one of the denominations, great or small, gave the Sunday school recognition as an integral part of its system. Little attention was paid to it in the ruling body of the local church. It chose its own officers, obtained its own teachers, made its own rules, and for its teachings was responsible to no ecclesiastical authority. It was generally an ally to, but independent of, the church. In this respect a gradual change has taken place. Its relations are now much closer, its position is defined; and the institution is sanctioned and supervised by the church.

7. Self-developing. The system of the Sunday school has been evolved without guidance or control from any human authority. It has been from the first self-organizing, and has been also self-developing. Some might consider the form which it has taken accidental; but it is better to regard it as providential. The men and women who laid

the foundations of the Sunday school were building under a divine direction of which they were unconscious. Working apart from each other, on both sides of the sea, and separated by wilderness and prairie, everywhere they established an institution under the same general principles, and with substantial unity in its plans. Perhaps one cause for its unity of method is that it arose in the midst of the Anglo-Saxon race, a people which has instinctive tendencies toward law, system, and organization. If it had started among a Latin people, where men, and not systems, rule, there might have been a different form of organization, with different aims, with different titles for officers, in every province. But throughout the English-speaking world, which is the habitat of the Sunday school, the institution bears the same name. Its principal or conductor is called a superintendent—cumbersome though the title may be—and its working force are known as teachers.

8. **Bible Study.** The most prominent trait in the Sunday school of the present is that it has become the most extensive movement for instruction in the Sacred Scriptures that the world has yet seen. All these millions of members, young and old, are engaged in the study of one book—the Holy Bible. Many of these millions, indeed, study the Bible superficially, unintelligently, with narrow interpretations and crude methods; yet in the Sunday schools of the lowest type as well as of the highest some portion of the Bible every week is brought to the scholars' attention. That the Bible is so generally known and so widely circulated, that the demand for this ancient book warrants the print-

ing of more than ten million copies every year, is due more to the Sunday school, with all its defects of method, than to any other institution. This concentration of attention upon the Bible has grown gradually in the Sunday school. In the eighteenth century Sunday school, both of England and America, religious instruction was only one of its aims; and it was instruction in the catechism and forms of worship rather than in the Bible. But by slow degrees the Bible came more prominently to the front, until now the Sunday school is everywhere the school with one text-book. He who surveys the Sunday school through the inner eye beholds it on one day in each week covering the continent with its millions of students, all face to face with some portion of the great text-book of religion. The thoughtful observer will reflect that a people whose children and youth come into weekly contact with the living word will not wander far from the path of righteousness.

II

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

The general characteristics of the Sunday school, as they have gradually developed during its long history, must be considered in any plan for organizing and conducting an individual school. The institution should be studied both ideally and practically: practically, to ascertain what the Sunday school has been and is now; yet ideally, with a view to developing its highest efficiency and largest usefulness. Such a plan for the specific Sunday school may be called its constitution. It is desirable to have the constitution in written or printed form, but it is not necessary. There is no more complete system than the government of Great Britain, yet it has no written constitution; and Mr. James Bryce has shown us in America that the instrument known as the Constitution of the United States by no means represents our own actual method of government. In every nation there is an unwritten law, wrought out of a people's consciousness, which is more imperative and enduring than any parchment scroll or printed form.

The general principles to be maintained in establishing and developing a Sunday school are the following:

1. **Aim.** The primary aims of the Sunday school are religious instruction, character-development, and effective service. It is not to teach history,

nor science, nor sociology, but religion; and not merely to impart a knowledge of religion to the intellect of its pupils, but, infinitely more important, to make religion an effective force in the life of the individual scholar. As a Christian institution, in the definition given by one of its greatest leaders,¹ "The Sunday school is a department of the Church of Christ, in which the word of Christ is taught, for the purpose of bringing souls to Christ, and of building up souls in Christ." If it be in connection with a Jewish synagogue or temple—as are some of the best Sunday schools or Sabbath schools in our land—it is for the purpose of instruction in the faith of the ancient fathers, and of making their teachings live again in the men and women of to-day. A true religious education, such as the Sunday school seeks to give, will include three aims: (1) knowledge, (2) character, (3) service. There must be an intellectual grasping of the truth; a character built on the truth, out of faith in God, and the life of God inspiring the human soul; and service for God and humanity. The Sunday school seeks to develop not only saints in fellowship with God, but workers for God, who shall strive to realize on earth the kingdom of God, not seeking to be ministered unto but to minister. There have been centuries in the past when the Christian ideal was the cloistered saint, living apart in communion with God. But that was a pitifully incomplete conception of the perfect man. In our age we have the larger ideal of saintliness with service; and to promote this should be the aim of every Sunday school.

¹ Bishop John H. Vincent.

2. **Method.** To attain its aim the Sunday school employs the teaching method. The Sunday school is not, as some weak-minded people have called it, "the nursery of the church." Nor is it, as it has been named, "the Bible service"; for, although it holds a service, it is more than a service. It is not—or should not be—a gathering of groups, large or small, where silent hearers listen to sermonettes by little preachers, miscalled teachers. It holds a service imbued with the spirit of worship, yet worship is not its central purpose. It should have music, but it is not primarily a service of song. It should be pervaded by an atmosphere of happiness, but mere enjoyment is not its object. The Sunday school is a *school*; and the very word shows that its aim is instruction and character formation, and its method is that of teaching. For the work of a Sunday school the essentials are three:

(1) There must be the living teacher who is fitted to inspire, to instruct, and to guide. His part is not merely to pour knowledge into his pupils, but to awaken thought, to guide the search for truth, to call forth expression in character and in action.¹

(2) There must also be the scholar who is to be taught. It is his part in the process of instruction not merely to listen and to remember, not merely to receive impressions, but to give expression to the teaching, in life, in character, in influence, and in service. The true effectiveness of the teaching in the Sunday school will be shown by

¹ For qualifications and functions of the teacher see Chapters XIII and XIV.

the reproductive power of the truth in the life of the scholar.

(3) There must be a text-book in the hands of both the teacher and the pupil. In any school for religious instruction one book will of necessity stand prominent, that great Book of books which records the divine revelation to man. The Sunday school may teach history, geography, institutions, doctrines, literature of the Bible, but these only as a framework or a foundation for the education of the heart into a personal fellowship with God. This character-molding, faith-impelling force is the divine truth taught in the Bible through the experiences and teachings of patriarchs, prophets, priests, psalmists, sages, and apostles, and above all by the words and life and redemptive work of the Master himself. And the subjects of study in the Sunday school need not be limited to the text of Scripture. There may be extra-biblical material for the teaching of character and service; and all this should be open to the Sunday school.

3. Relation to the Church. However independent of the church organization the Sunday school may have been in its beginnings, and however self-dependent some union Sunday schools may of necessity be in certain churchless regions, the general fact is established that the Sunday school as an institution belongs to the church, is under the care of the church, has a claim upon moral and financial support by the church, should be a feeder to the membership of the church, and should gratefully accept the supervision of the church. It should regard itself and be recognized by all as in many ways the most important department of the church.

4. **Government.** All power must be under direction, and the mighty energies of the Sunday school especially need a wise, strong guidance. In the general management of the Sunday school two elements should be recognized: (1) the rights of the workers and (2) the authority of the church.

(1) It must ever be kept in mind that the Sunday school is an army of volunteers. Its workers are men and women who of their own accord give to the school without compensation their gift of service. Those who make such a contribution to the success of the Sunday school should certainly have a voice in its management.

(2) But it is not to be forgotten, on the other side, that the Sunday school is not superior to the church, nor independent of it, but subsidiary to it; hence the church should be able to exercise some control over the school if such control shall ever be needed. For example, in the choice of a superintendent, who is the executive officer of the school, the ruling body of the local church and the working body of teachers and officers should unite. No one should undertake to conduct a church Sunday school unless he thus has the definite assurance that his teachers are with him, and that his church is officially supporting him.

5. **Officers.** Little need be said here on this subject, for it is one with which every worker is familiar.

(1) There must be a leader, or manager, the executive head of the school, who is universally styled the superintendent. If we were organizing a new institution, and not describing one already world-wide and with officers already named by

common usage and consent, we would prefer that the executive of the Sunday school receive the title of Principal or Director; but the somewhat awkward word Superintendent is settled upon him, and will remain.

(2) There must also be an assistant superintendent, or more than one, as the size of the school may demand. The better title is associate superintendent, as is now given in the larger number of well-organized schools. The superintendent should have the privilege of nominating his own associates or assistants, the nominations to be confirmed by the board of teachers and officers.

(3) There will be a secretary, with such assistants as he may require, to be nominated by the secretary and confirmed by the teachers.

(4) There will be a treasurer, to care for the funds, and to disburse them as ordered by the board of teachers, or the Sunday school as a whole.

(5) Lastly, but most important of all, there must be the working force of instructors, the faculty of the institution, its teachers, who should be carefully chosen. The pastor, as well as the superintendent, should have an active voice in their call, since they are his coworkers in the religious instruction of the congregation.

6. Membership. In the conception of a Sunday school, both ideal and practical, the constituency for which it is established must be considered. As has been noted, it was originally for children only, and only for children who were destitute of home training, and outside of church relationship. The earliest Sunday schools were what are called

in England ragged schools, and in America mission schools. But in the noble evolution of the movement the Sunday school constituency has been vastly enlarged; and now it is recognized that the Sunday school is for all ages and all classes. It should embrace the young and old, the ignorant and intelligent, the poor and rich, the sinner as well as the saint. The Sunday school which fulfills its mission to society will welcome all the world.

III

THE NECESSITY AND ESSENTIALS OF A GRADED SUNDAY SCHOOL

1. **The Necessity of Grading.** As the result of the gradual and unguided evolution of the Sunday school through a century or longer, most schools are now divided in a vague way into certain departments, generally known as the Primary, or Infant Class; the Youths Department, or Boys and Girls; and the Adult Department, or Bible Classes. Many who have charge of schools such as these regard them as graded, and so report them. But the mere naming of departments does not constitute a graded school. Whoever studies the ungraded or loosely graded Sunday school will perceive in it certain evils which can be removed only by a thorough system of grading, maintained faithfully through a series of years. Some of these conditions which make the graded Sunday school an absolute necessity are the following:

(1) *The School as a Whole.* The close observer, looking at the entire school, notes first of all that its gains and its losses in membership are at the extremes of its constituency. It is the normal condition for the gains to come in the Primary section; for the little children in families are attracted to the school or brought there by older children. There is almost invariably a constant increase in this department, requiring frequently the organization of new classes in the grade above,

among the younger boys and girls. But, on the other hand, there is a constant loss of older scholars. In most schools, at the age of fourteen, in what is known as the early adolescent period of life, the pupils, for one reason or another, begin to drop out, and few enter to take their places. Almost every school is thus growing at the bottom and dying at the top. The Primary classes are full, but the classes of those above fourteen years are usually small—two large boys here, three yonder. And although girls continue in the school more frequently than boys, there will appear the same conditions—some large classes of girls and young women, but others where discouraged teachers are sitting down with one, two, or three pupils. Six or eight years ago these same classes came out from the Primary Department, each with eight or ten pupils; now they are mere skeleton classes, barely alive, and threatened with dissolution. Every earnest, thoughtful superintendent would rejoice to find some plan that will guarantee large classes of young people between sixteen and eighteen years of age, for this is the most vital period in the life of the individual. Such a plan is proposed in the graded system.

(2) *The Condition of the Classes.* Fixing the attention upon the several classes, the critic of the school system notes three unfavorable conditions:

(a) There is the inequality in the size of classes, to which reference has already been made. When classes come together by accident, pupils bringing their friends, or new members joining whatever classes they please, some classes of boys or girls will inevitably be too large for good government

or good teaching, and others will be too small to create any enthusiasm, either in the teacher or the pupils.

(b) There is also an inequality in the ages of pupils in the same class. A class may include one pupil or two pupils sixteen years old, and others as young as ten, or even nine years; some who during the week are in the high school, and others who can scarcely read the verses assigned to them.

(c) Where these inequalities of numbers and ages exist there is a lack of that class spirit which is an essential element of power in a well-ordered Sunday school. Every class should be a unit, with a strong social bond; but this ideal cannot be realized when there are in the class two or three youths in the noisy, assertive, self-conscious stage of early adolescence, and others who are several years younger. Nor can there be a proper social bond in a class with only two or three members. They are likely to be irregular in attendance, to find excuses for absence or for leaving the school, until at last the discouraged teacher and the listless scholars together drop out of sight.

For the correction of these evils of inequality in numbers and in ages, and of this lack of class spirit, the only successful method is to grade the school, and resolutely to keep it graded.

(3) *Difficulties of Administration.* The difficulties which confront the superintendent in the management of an ungraded school are many and great.

(a) The first and ever-present difficulty is in

obtaining teachers for new classes. The constant growth of the Primary Department is his perennial perplexity. To relieve the congestion in the crowded Infant Class its older pupils must be brought into the main school, and teachers must be found for them. The superintendent is always seeking, and often seeking vainly, for new teachers.

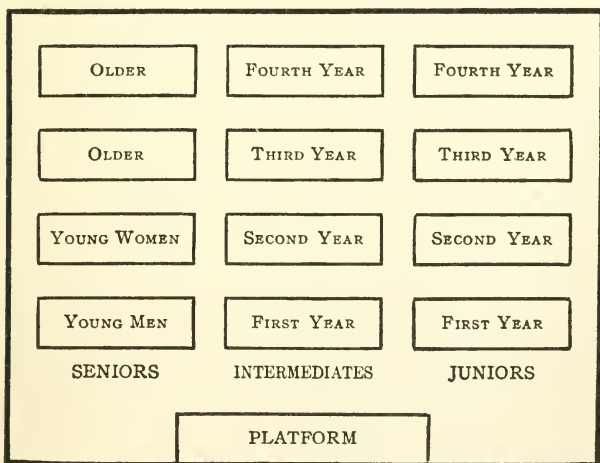
(b) Another difficulty is found in the attempt to transfer scholars from one class to another. No matter how much out of place a pupil may be, it is almost impossible to transfer him to another class without incurring the displeasure of the teacher, the scholar, or the scholar's family. And however overgrown or ill-assorted a class may have become, to divide it is a delicate task, almost sure to cause ill feeling. Also, when there arises the need of a teacher for a new class just emerging from the Primary Department, the natural plan would be to combine some of the skeleton classes in the other departments, and thereby release a teacher for service with the new class. But the superintendent who attempts this plan finds that almost invariably it results in some of the older scholars leaving the school because their teacher is taken from them.

2. The Essentials of a Graded School. Briefly stated, the essentials of a graded Sunday school are the following:¹

(1) *Departments.* The graded Sunday school is organized in certain distinct groups, of which the most important, for our present purpose, are the Primary, Junior, Intermediate, and Senior Depart-

¹ For a more complete statement, see the volume of this series on *The Graded Sunday School in Principle and Practice*, by Dr. H. H. Meyer.

ments. To these will be added the Beginners and Adult Departments when the subject comes up for a complete treatment. Each of these departments should have, if possible, a separate room; but if these rooms cannot be provided in the building, the pupils should be seated by departments in the different parts of the one room. Perhaps it may be assumed that there is a separate room for the Primary Department; then let those who have most recently come from the Primary be seated on the right block of seats; the Youths or Intermediate in the middle; and the Senior classes on the left block, or vice versa. The younger classes of the department should have the front seats, the older those in the rear, in regular gradation. The school may be arranged in the order shown in this diagram:



(2) *Classes.* The number of classes should be fixed for each department, and their relationship established, so that when a group of scholars is promoted to a higher grade in the same department, or in the next department, they do not enter as classes, but as individuals; not to form new classes in the department, but to be placed in classes already formed. This plan will keep the classes in the Senior Department always full, and avoid the unfortunate skeleton classes of the ungraded school. It will also impress upon the pupils the importance of faithful work.

(3) *Promotions.* There should be annual and simultaneous promotions throughout the school. One Sunday in the year should be set apart as Promotion Sunday; and on that day all promotions should be made. Those who are to be advanced from the Intermediate to the Senior Department are called out by name and placed in their classes, which are not new classes, but old classes replenished with new members. These promotions will vacate the seats of the Fourth Year classes in the Intermediate Department. But these seats will at once be filled by the Third Year now becoming the Fourth Year, and taking their seats; the Second Year pupils becoming the Third Year; and the First Year the Second Year. The First Year of the Intermediate Department will be left vacant, to be filled by promotion of the Fourth Year in the Junior Department, and the moving up of classes to the year above in the same department; and the First Year of the Junior Department will be filled by promotion from the Primary Department.

(4) *Teachers.* As groups of scholars pass either from one grade or from one department to another there must also be a change of teachers. This constitutes the crux of the entire system, and in its inception is apt to prove the most formidable obstacle in grading the school. The pupils, however, are accustomed to a system of promotions in the day school, and expect to leave their teachers when they change their grades; but many of the teachers in the Sunday school, not being trained under the system, dislike to lose their scholars, and show their dissatisfaction in ways that affect their pupils. This difficulty must be overcome by tact and an appeal to unselfish motives; teachers must consent for the sake of the common good to give up their old classes and take new ones which begin in the department. The teacher may remain in the grade and receive a new class each year as his pupils advance to a higher grade; or he may remain with the class and advance until the pupils pass from their former department to a higher one, as from Primary to Junior, from Junior to Intermediate, and from Intermediate to Senior. He should then return to a new first year's class in his own department and lead it through the course. If any teacher asks, "Why cannot I go with my class into the Senior Department?" the answer is that if the plan be permitted for one it must be recognized for all; and in the Senior Department there will follow an increasing number of classes, with a relatively diminishing membership in each class. The scholars also need the inspiration of contact with different teachers. Furthermore, the teacher who is adapted

to the Junior or Intermediate Department is rarely a suitable teacher for Senior scholars. Hence there is need of a careful assignment of teachers no less than of pupils. Therefore, to maintain a graded school the pupils must change teachers when they change departments.

(5) *Lessons.* There should be graded lessons for each department. If a graded system be followed in the school, as it should be, with different subjects, text-books, and lessons for each department, giving to the entire school a regular, systematic, progressive curriculum, this requisite will be met. If, however, the uniform lesson for all the school be followed, as at present is still the case in many Sunday schools, the graded teaching must be given in the form of supplemental lessons, taught by the head of the department where it has a separate room, or by the teacher if the departments must be assembled in one room. In some form the graded teaching is an absolutely essential requisite of the graded school. Most schools, when once thoroughly graded, will realize the need of the next step in the evolution of the institution—lessons graded in subjects as well as in methods for the several departments.

(6) *Basis of Promotion.* The question is often asked, "Should promotions be made on the basis of age, or as the result of examinations?" The examination system may be regarded as desirable in the Sunday school, but there are as yet few schools where thorough examinations can be rigidly insisted on as a part of the school system, and promotions invariably made to depend upon standing. A school which meets only once a week,

for a session of less than an hour and a half, and with but one lesson period of forty minutes or even less, cannot maintain the same strictness in its standards as the public school. Moreover, new scholars are continually entering the schools, and, while most of them begin at the foot of the ladder in the Primary Department, yet others enter at various ages and in various grades. Any system of promotion based merely upon acquirement attested by examination is sure to become in many instances a meaningless form when applied to the Sunday school. Yet acquirements and examinations need not be ignored in the graded Sunday school. There may be certain ages at which the pupils shall by right pass from a lower grade to a higher. But it may also be arranged that pupils who are exceptionally bright, well-informed, and studious can be promoted a year in advance of their classmates by passing examination. Let the examination be given in writing to all the pupils, and let all be urged to take it; with the promise that those who pass will be promoted, even though they be less than the required age. But let it also be understood that failure to pass the examination will not keep the student for more than one year from promotion. In other words, the examination may well be made the door through which earnest students may pass on, and so keep abreast of their equals in training and ability.

IV

THE GRADING OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

The question is often asked, "How may an ungraded Sunday school be placed on a graded basis?" The work may seem simple, and easy of accomplishment, but when it is undertaken difficulties arise which must be intelligently and tactfully met.

1. **The Difficulties.** If all our Sunday-school teachers were trained educators, accustomed to the methods of the public school, they would see at once the advantages of the graded system, and heartily enter into it. But most of our teachers are untrained, and their range of vision often fails to reach beyond their own class and their immediate environment. The relation between teachers and scholars is personal rather than official; and on both sides the personal equation often complicates the problem. In every school there are a few teachers who are so strongly influenced by their feeling for their pupils that they fail to recognize the needs of the school. There are also scholars, especially in the sentimental early adolescent age, who are unwilling to leave their teachers when promotion is offered to them. But unless the change of teachers is maintained the graded system will utterly fail to benefit the school; it will be graded in name only, and not in fact. This part of the program must be carried through, even though it may cost the school

the loss of a teacher or two teachers and their scholars.

2. **The Remedy** for this difficulty is only to be found in carefully considered action by presenting the necessity and value of the plan so clearly that the teachers as a whole will fully understand it, appreciate its importance, and heartily accept it. The grading should not be attempted upon the mere fiat of the superintendent, nor on the vote of a bare majority of the workers. The teachers must recognize the self-sacrifice which it requires, and must make that self-sacrifice generously, giving up their scholars for the general good. The possible objections of the scholars are more easily overcome, for they are accustomed in the public schools to promotions with change of teachers, and readily accommodate themselves to the same system in the Sunday school. Thoughtfulness and kindness, with time, will soon remove the hindrances from the path of the graded school.

3. **The Method of Grading.** The school may be graded in either of two ways, the gradual or the simultaneous method.

(1) In the gradual method the superintendent, with the concurrence of the teachers, may announce that after a certain date all promotions will be made in accordance with the graded system, leaving the classes as they are until the time for promotion arrives. Then promote from Primary to Junior, from Junior to Intermediate, and from Intermediate to Senior, according to the principles of the graded school; and in four or five years, if the system be maintained, the result will be a school fully graded in all its departments.

(2) In the simultaneous method of grading, the plan must be carefully matured, and general coöperation of all assured. The following plan has been tested in more than one school, and found to work successfully:

(a) Let a careful committee be chosen to arrange the details of grading. The committee should consist of teachers acquainted with the scholars as far as may be practicable, and should, of course, include the superintendent. They should also take an abundance of time for their work.

(b) Obtain the ages of all the scholars between eight and eighteen years of age, and, approximately, the ages up to thirty. Let this list be made quietly by each teacher for his or her own class. It may be desirable not to inform the pupils for what purpose the enrollment is made. Instances have been known where scholars have understated their ages, hoping thereby to remain with favorite teachers.

(c) Let the committee go over the lists and assign the scholars to classes according to age and acquirement. In some degree social relations should be considered, so that each class may be as far as practicable a social unit. In the Intermediate Department boys and girls should be in separate classes, and not more than six or eight pupils should be placed in one class. No announcement of the assignment of scholars to classes should be made until the day fixed for the reorganization of the school. It will be a good plan to prepare a map or chart of the schoolroom, with the place proposed for each class indicated upon it.

(d) On the day appointed, after the opening

exercises, first let the seats or rooms set apart for the Senior Department be vacated; and then let the roll be called according to the new list. "Class No. 1, Senior Department. Mr. A——, with the following scholars." As their names are called let them take their places, until the list of classes and scholars in this department is filled. Next vacate the seats assigned to the Intermediate Department, and let these teachers and pupils take their places; then the Junior Department, according to the same plan. The Primary Department can be graded by its superintendent or teacher without aid from the committee.

Let it be understood that every scholar must take the place assigned to him at the time when his name is called; and that only for an important reason can an assignment, when once made, be changed. In a large school there will be found a few cases where the committee has made a mistake, even with the greatest care; and these mistakes should be rectified, but not until the pupils have taken their new places temporarily in the scheme of the school.

4. Advantages of Thorough Grading. Many benefits will follow from the proper organization of the school; and their value will be increasingly apparent as the system is maintained through a series of years.

(1) *Appearance.* It is the testimony of every superintendent and pastor who has graded his Sunday school that the appearance of the school is greatly improved by the graded system. The older scholars are assembled in one body, instead of being scattered throughout the room; scholars

of the same size and age are brought together in classes. The school will also actually seem larger than it was before the grading.

(2) *Order.* The order of the school will be more easily maintained. The big boys and the giggling girls, both at the self-conscious, awkward age, will be in a new environment, no longer the leaders over smaller and younger pupils, but in classes by themselves, and with responsibilities appealing to their self-respect.

(3) *Social Relations.* It will be a benefit to the scholars of each age to be associated in groups of the same period in life, with the same interests and similar mental acquirements. Many scholars will find their new associations more congenial than their former ones in the ungraded classes, where older and younger people have been brought together. The class will now become, far more than it was before, a social power.

(4) *Teaching Work.* In the ungraded class, with older and younger pupils together, the teacher met with his greatest difficulty in finding a common ground of interest. In the graded class, with pupils of uniform age and equal intellectual understanding, the teaching can be better adapted to the needs of the pupils.

(5) *Incentive to Interest.* The prospect of promotion awakens an interest in the classes. Each scholar looks forward to the time when he will attain to a higher grade with its enlarged privileges.

(6) *Obtaining Teachers.* The grading of the school greatly aids in the solution of the ever-present problem of obtaining new teachers. (a) The

graded school requires a smaller number of teachers than the ungraded school, since it provides for the consolidation of skeleton classes in the Senior Department. This sets at liberty a number of experienced teachers for service in other grades.

(b) Whenever a new class comes from the Primary Department, a teacher is already at hand in the Junior Department whose class at the same time has advanced to the Intermediate Department. The teacher goes year by year with his class until it leaves the department, and then he returns to a new class beginning the studies of the same department. (c) After the results of a teacher-training class are available there will always be trained teachers waiting for classes.

(7) *Leakage Period.* The young people between fifteen and twenty years of age constitute the "leakage period,"¹ when they are in great danger of drifting away from the school. They will be held to the school far more firmly if they have before them the prospect of membership in large classes of young people, with social opportunities, and club life, so popular with youth at the early adolescent age. It has been clearly shown by practical experience that an organized Senior Department, with large classes kept full by regular reinforcement from the Intermediate Department, will maintain itself and hold its members, while skeleton classes of the young people constantly tend to disintegration.

The well-organized, completely graded Sunday school possesses such evident and great advantages that it is certain to be established wherever

¹ Dr. A. H. McKinney, in *After the Primary—What?*

thorough and efficient religious instruction is sought. The sooner it comes, and the more faithfully it is maintained, the better it will be for the church of to-day and to-morrow, and the more quickly and effectually will the grave problems of our modern civilization be solved.

V

THE DEPARTMENTS OF THE GRADED SUNDAY SCHOOL

General Scheme. The four departments essential to a graded Sunday school, whether large or small, have already been named by anticipation. But it is necessary to give to the subject a closer consideration, and to add the names of other departments which are needed either as departments or subdivisions in the school. Following the analogy of the secular schools, the great divisions of a Sunday school may be named as Elementary, Secondary, and Advanced or Adult. The Elementary Division will include the Cradle Roll, Beginners, Primary, and Junior, taking the scholar up to twelve years of age. The Secondary Division will include the Intermediate and Senior Departments, also the Teacher-training Class, and will embrace the scholars between twelve and twenty years of age. The Advanced or Adult Division will include all the classes wherein the average age is above twenty years, including the Home Department. Beginning with the youngest children, the departments of a thoroughly organized school are the following:

1. **The Cradle Roll.**¹ This should include all the little ones in the families of the congregation who are too young to attend the school. Their names,

¹ This department is now named in Sunday schools of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and some others, the Font Roll, or Baptismal Roll.

in large lettering, in plain print rather than script, should be recorded upon a list, framed and hung upon the wall in the Primary room. A separate card catalogue should be kept of the names alphabetically arranged, with ages, birthdays, parents' names, and the street address of each family. Every effort should be made to keep the list complete; children should inform their teachers of new little brothers and sisters for the Cradle Roll; the pastor in his visitation should take their names and report them; and the teacher or conductor in charge of the Cradle Roll should occasionally visit every family on the list. Whenever gifts are made to the pupils of the school, as at Christmas or on birthdays, toys and dolls for the little ones of the Cradle Roll should not be forgotten. In a small school the care of the roll and the visiting of the families may be assigned to the Primary superintendent; but in a large Sunday school it will call for a special conductor, and recognition as a separate department. Let no one suppose that this is an unimportant, sentimental matter. The Cradle Roll, maintained as it should be, will awaken interest in every family having a name inscribed upon it, and in due time will lead many little feet to the Sunday school.

2. The Beginners Department. At about three years of age the little children should be brought to the school, and be regularly enrolled as attending members, their names being now taken from the Cradle Roll. They should remain in the Beginners Department from the age of three to that of six years—the Kindergarten period in the

public school. Here they should be told simple Bible and nature stories, without effort to place the stories in chronological order; for children of this age have only a faint conception of the sequence of events. They may be taught simple songs, marching exercises, etc. It is a mistake, however, to give them much, if any lessons, to tax the memory, beyond a few short sentences of the Bible and verses of children's songs. If they can meet in a room by themselves, with their own teacher, it will be better than to have them in the Primary room; for the work in this grade should be constantly varied, and the stories very brief, in order not to weary the little ones. If they must meet in the room with the Primary children, they should sit by themselves as a separate section, and not with their older brothers and sisters.

3. The Primary Department. This department should be the home of little children between six and eight or nine years of age. They should remain in it until in the day school they have begun to read. Boys and girls may be placed in the same classes, which should be for those six years old, seven years old, and eight years old, respectively. With each year their seats should be changed, indicating their promotion from the lower to the higher classes. In this department the simpler stories of the Bible and other helpful stories adapted to the grade should not only be told but taught, and the children expected not only to learn but also to tell them. The Twenty-third Psalm, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, a few other selected passages of Scripture,

and some standard hymns of the Church should be memorized.

In many well-organized Sunday schools both the Cradle Roll and the Beginners class are recognized as subdivisions of the Primary Department, and are under the direction of the Primary superintendent.

4. **The Junior Department.** This department will care for the children from the ages of eight or nine until the full age of twelve; except that boys or girls who are especially advanced in intelligence may be promoted upon examination at eleven years. In a very small Sunday school all the pupils of this department may form one class, provided they can have a room by themselves. If they must meet with the rest of the school, they may be organized either in two classes, one of boys, the other of girls. If, however, the number of scholars will admit, it is far better to place the pupils in separate classes for boys and girls, with different classes for each year of the period. To scholars of the Junior grade the great characters and events of Bible history should be taught in their order; also the most important facts about the Bible, and in a simple form the lands and localities of the Bible. In churches which use a catechism this should constitute a part of the teaching in the Junior Department, for at this period the child's verbal memory attains its greatest strength.

5. **The Intermediate Department.** Here the pupils are from twelve to sixteen years of age. The classes should be small, generally of six boys or girls, never more than eight. This period in

life is known as early adolescence, and calls for careful direction by wise teachers. In the Intermediate Department the great biographies of the Bible should be studied, either as the regular or the supplemental lessons; also the heroic lives of leaders in the history of the Church, of foreign missionaries, and of men and women who have labored in the home fields. Boys and girls in this stage of life are instinctively hero-worshippers, and before them should be set high ideals of character and service. Special effort should be made in leading the scholars to personal consecration to Christ and to union with the Church; for if the great decision be not made before the age of sixteen is reached, there is great danger that it will never be reached. But that decision should include more than a formal profession. It should embrace a full surrender to the will of Christ, an inward, conscious spiritual life, an aim for completeness of Christian character, and especially a willingness to work for God and humanity. Youth is a season of ardor and of energy, a period of lofty ideals and noble endeavor. All those active powers of the youthful nature should be guided into channels of usefulness. The true twentieth century disciple of Christ is not one who lives alone feasting his soul on God, but one who stands among his fellow-men, eager to aid in the world's betterment.

6. The Senior Department. This is the preferable title, although some organized schools call it the Young People's Department, and restrict the word Senior to the classes of fully adult age. Still others call it the Assembly, and give it an organ-

ization independent of the Sunday school.¹ The age of entrance should be sixteen, except with some who in stature and mind are mature beyond their years. It is imperative, as we have already seen, that at the door of this department the young people should leave their former teachers, and should not form new Senior classes, but as individuals enter classes already established. This department includes the members of the school between sixteen and twenty years of age; not that members of classes must necessarily leave them at twenty, but that men or women above that age entering the school should rather join the Adult Department. The classes may be as large as the arrangement of rooms will allow; larger where each class can have a separate room, which is the ideal plan. Generally, young men and young women should be in separate classes. The teacher of a young men's class should be a man whose character will inspire the respect and win the fellowship of his class. The teacher of the young women's class will generally be a lady, although often men have been successful teachers of young women.

In this department the classes should be organized, each with its own officers, chosen by the members; and the class should be consulted when a teacher is to be appointed, although the voice of the class in the decision should be advisory and not mandatory. Especial attention should be given to the social activities of this department. Each class should have its own gatherings, classes of young men and women should meet together occasionally, and a Senior Reception should be

¹ Suggested by Dr. J. H. Vincent.

held at least annually to promote acquaintance among the members. The interest of the young people should also be enlisted in some definite form of service for the church or the community.

7. The Teacher-Training Department. The most promising young people, both men and women, should be selected at sixteen years of age—the time of promotion into the Senior Department—and should be organized as the Teacher-training or Normal Class. The best teacher obtainable should be assigned to this department. Often in the high school or some near-by college, a scholarly, Bible-loving instructor may be found who is willing to give a part of his time to the equipment of teachers for the coming generation. A text-book should be chosen from among those approved by the International Teacher-training Committee. No person should be admitted to this class who is not willing to give some time during the week to the study of the course. While the rest of the school may be studying the regular lessons, whether graded or uniform, this class should be at work with the teacher-training text-books. There should be thorough instruction with examinations looking toward a certificate of work done, such as the International Teacher-training diploma.¹ The course may cover two, three, or four years; and new members may be placed in the class at the opening of each year, to begin at the point where the class is studying, and to remain until they shall have completed the entire course. In

¹ For full information concerning Teacher-training, courses, examinations, and diplomas, write to the State Secretary of Sunday School Work, or to the office of the International Sunday School Association, No. 140 Dearborn Street, Chicago.

a properly graded school after a few years there will be a class graduating from and a class entering the Teacher-training Department each year.

This department should also include a Reserve Class, consisting of those who are ready to act as substitutes for absent teachers. If the uniform lessons are followed, the Reserve Class should study the lesson a week in advance of the school. Into this class the graduates of the Teacher-training Class should be placed, to remain until classes are ready for them in the school.

In some schools the Teacher-training and Reserve Classes do not form a separate department, but are two classes in the Senior Department. But it is the better plan in a large school to establish the Teacher-training Department, with its own officers, thereby adding to its prestige in the school.

8. The Adult Department. This will include all who are above the age of twenty years. It is the judgment of advanced leaders in Sunday-school work that at twenty years those who have belonged to Young People's classes in the Senior Department should leave them for the Adult Department. Otherwise, the Senior Department in a few years will cease to be a place where young people of sixteen and eighteen years feel at home. In the Adult Department men and women may meet together as members of the same class, unless there arise a demand for separate classes and the numbers enrolled justify the division. In conducting these classes two forms of instruction have been found to be successful: (1) the colloquial method of teaching, the class studying and discussing the lesson together under the guidance of

the leader; and (2) the lecture method, the teacher being the principal speaker, but always admitting questions and answers on the subject suggested by the lesson. Classes in this department may be allowed to choose their own courses of study, provided (1) that the subjects and methods are in line with the general aim of religious education, and not merely secular science or history; (2) that the courses of successive years have some sequence, and are not chosen in a haphazard, accidental manner. The Adult Department under wise direction should promote a large, intelligent, broad-minded, philanthropic type of Christian character in the church and the community.

9. **The Home Department.** This department, like the Cradle Roll at the other extreme of the Sunday-school constituency, is composed of people, both young and old, who cannot be present at its sessions, but are interested in its work, and willing to give some time to its studies. In every community there are such people—aged or infirm men and women, invalids, mothers unable to leave their offspring, commercial travelers, and people who live too far from the school to attend it. These are organized into the Home Department, furnished with the literature of the school, study its textbooks, make their report of work done, and send their contributions to its support through the Home Department superintendent or visitor.¹

¹ For plans of the Home Department, address the Secretary of the State Sunday School Association, or Dr. W. A. Duncan, Syracuse, New York, who is recognized as the founder of this system.

VI

THE SUPERINTENDENT

1. **His Importance.** Several years ago, the president of the New York Central Railway was called upon by a legislative committee to explain the system of signals employed upon the railroad for the protection of passengers. He gave a detailed statement, answered every question, and then made this remark: "However perfect the system may seem to be, there must always be a man to work it; and in the final analysis more depends on the man than on the plan."

That which is true in every human organization is especially true in the Sunday school: its success depends not on a constitution, whether written or unwritten, but upon a man. In the Sunday school that man is the superintendent, who not only works the plan, but also generally plans the work. Given an efficient superintendent, an efficient school will usually be developed; for the able man will call forth or will train up able workers. Hence the first and greatest requisite for a successful Sunday school is that the right man be chosen as superintendent.

2. **His Appointment.** The selection of the superintendent should be the task not only of the officers and teachers in the Sunday school, but of the entire church, for every family in the congregation has an interest in his appointment. The pastor should be consulted, and should give diligent

attention and time to the search for a superintendent, not merely because he may be presumed to know his constituency, but more especially because out of all the church the superintendent is to be his most important helper. The election of the superintendent should be made by the workers in the school, its board of teachers and officers, and its action should be formally confirmed by the ruling board of the local church. No man should hold the office of a superintendent who fails to receive the approval of the church of which the school is a part. He should know that in his appointment the school, the church, and the pastor all unite.

3. **His Term of Office.** He should be chosen for a term of one year; but may be reëlected for as many terms as appear expedient. Frequent changes in the management of the school will tend to destroy the efficiency of its work. But whenever the great interests involved in the religious education of an entire church or community require a new superintendent the change should be made, even though sympathy be felt for the one set aside. The institution must not be sacrificed to save the feelings of the man.

4. **His Qualifications.** It is important to consider the qualifications of an ideal superintendent, remembering, however, that all these qualities are rarely to be found in one man. We must set before us high ideals, not expecting that they will always be fully realized, yet ever seeking to attain them as far as may be possible in this imperfect world. The following are the most important qualifications for a superintendent; some of them are essential, all are desirable:

(1) *Moral Character.* The Sunday school undertakes to train the young in character; therefore he who stands as its responsible head must possess a character worthy of admiration and imitation. His life must honor, and not dishonor, his profession. It is possible for a man whose work for an hour on Sunday is in behalf of the gospel so to live in his family, in business, and in society as to work for six days against the gospel, and more than undo all his efforts for good. The leader in such an uplifting movement as the Sunday school must have clean hands and a pure heart. What Saint Paul wrote of a bishop he would have written of a Sunday school superintendent: he must have "a good report." In the well-known painting of the Emancipation Proclamation may be seen standing at the right hand of President Lincoln the Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon P. Chase, who once said, "A man in my position must not only seem right, but be right; and not only be right, but seem right." So will every one say of the Sunday-school superintendent.

(2) *A Devout Believer.* The superintendent's character should be irradiated with the fine glow of a Christian faith. He should be one who has seen the heavenly vision and unto it has not been disobedient; one whose spirit has been kindled by the Divine Spirit burning like a fire within; one who is himself a Christian man, longing to lead other men into fellowship with the Father through Jesus Christ the Son.

(3) *A Working Church Member.* We have already learned that the Sunday school is not a society or an institution standing alone. It is a

branch of the church, and one of the most important branches. The normal growth of the church depends in large measure upon the Sunday school, and the support of the Sunday school comes, or should come, from the church. The superintendent who endeavors to do his duty to his scholars will strive to lead them to Christ and into active membership and service in the church. Therefore, he himself must be a professed, loyal, and effective member of the church. His name should not only stand upon its roll, but his heart should also be enlisted in its behalf.

(4) *A Bible Student.* The Sunday school is the school with one preëminent text-book; and of that Book the superintendent should be a diligent student. His work is executive and not instructional; yet he must supervise the teaching, and this supervision he cannot rightly give unless he is familiar with the course of study. He should study the lesson of each department, perhaps not as thoroughly as the teachers in the department, but sufficiently to maintain acquaintance with their work. And he should master not only the specific lessons of the immediate course before his school, but also the Book as a whole.

One successful superintendent gave as a secret of his power to make his school, both teachers and scholars, willing to do whatever he asked, "I never expect my teachers or scholars to do anything that I am not ready to do myself. Before I ask them to bring their Bibles I bring mine. When I asked my school to be ready on the following Sunday to repeat in concert the Nineteenth Psalm, I committed it to memory during the

week, and when the time came spoke the words with the school." Only that superintendent who himself loves the Bible, and studies it, can have a true Bible school.

(5) *An Able Executive.* The Sunday school is like that vision seen by the prophet Ezekiel, a system of wheels within wheels, all endowed with life; and the master of the mechanism directing its motion is the superintendent. Moreover, each of these living wheels in the Sunday-school machine is a volunteer worker, who may at any moment drop out of his orbit. To hold together these varied elements, to combine their movements, to guide each in his own sphere, to compass the common purpose through all the forces working as one, requires a wise brain and a skillful hand. The superintendent should have a plan for the school, with details throughout for every emergency; he should be ready to assign to every worker the task for which he is best fitted; he should be able to work with others, not merely to command others; and he should be a leader whom others will follow, not by the might of an overmastering will, but by the magnetism of an attractive personality. He should never forget that with others as well as with himself service in the Sunday school is not compulsory but voluntary, that his associates lay on the altar their free-hearted, unpaid labor; and that such workers cannot be commanded, although by tact and wise generalship they may be led to accomplish the most difficult tasks.

(6) *Sympathy with Youth.* The superintendent's office will bring him into relations with youth

during all its stages, from early childhood through the entire adolescent period. He must be able to see life and the world through the eyes of a little child, of a growing boy, and of a young man. The sympathy which he needs is not a compassionate feeling *for* youth, but a feeling *with* youth, an ability to put himself in its place; to feel as young people feel, and to understand why they act as they sometimes do. This sympathy will impart a love for young people, such a love as will enable him to be patient with their foibles and faults, to exert a powerful influence over them, and to keep before them noble ideals of character and service.

(7) *Teachable Spirit.* No matter how much the superintendent knows, or thinks he knows, he should hold his mind open to new knowledge. He should be on the alert for new ideas, from the periodicals, from books, and from his fellow workers, in conversation, at conventions and institutes; not that he may inflict every new method upon his school, but that out of many methods he may select the best. When Michael Angelo was past eighty-five years old, and almost blind, he was found one day beside an antique torso which had recently been dug out of the ground, bending over it, and carefully pressing his fingers upon its surface. When asked what he was doing, he answered, "I am learning"! The masters in every department of work are never too wise nor too old to learn.

If a man can be found who possesses all these seven traits of character and temperament, the school which can secure him for its superintendent

will be fortunate indeed. And the superintendent who thoughtfully reads the catalogue of qualifications, and feels that in some of them he is lacking, may by divine grace and his own will working together make progress toward the goal of becoming an ideal superintendent.

VII

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The superintendent has been found, has been chosen, and is in his place—what are the prerogatives and the duties of his office? These may be considered under three classes: (1) His general duties. (2) His duties during the week. (3) His duties in the session of the school.

1. **General.** (1) *Supervision.* It is his right to supervise and direct the work of the school without interference as to details from the teachers, the officers of the church, or the pastor. The pastor may be the admiral of the fleet, directing the general movements of the sea campaign; but the superintendent is the captain of the ship, through whom orders are to be given to all on board.

(2) *Selection of Teachers.* He should have the chief word in the choice and appointment of teachers, but in the choice he should obtain the concurrence of his pastor; and their election should be made upon the superintendent's nomination by the teachers and officers.

(3) *Assignment of Scholars.* He should possess the final authority in the assignment of scholars to classes, in any changes from class to class, and in promotions from lower to higher departments. In these responsibilities he may be greatly aided by an associate superintendent, to whom his authority may be delegated.

(4) *Program of Services.* It is the superintendent's prerogative to plan and direct the services of the school session. It may be the part of wisdom for him to consult with the musical director or organist in the selection of hymns, but it is the superintendent's right to choose and to announce them, in common with all parts of the program.

(5) *Support.* He is entitled to a loyal support from all his fellow workers; but if he is tactful he will take them into his confidence, will present his plans for their consideration, and will not attempt important reforms or changes without their concurrence.

2. **Week-day Work.** He is the superintendent of the Sunday school for seven days in every week; and will find much work to be done between the sessions. His week-day duties will include some that have already been mentioned.

(1) *Program.* Before he comes to the school he should invariably prepare a well worked out program for each session. It is a good plan to have a large blank book, in which two pages opposite each other are assigned to the session for the day. Every hymn should be selected in advance and noted in its place; every announcement to be made should be written; the outline of a lesson review, if one is to be given, should be indicated; and space should be left for memoranda of miscellaneous matters which may need attention. This program should be laid upon the desk, so that if for any reason the superintendent should be out of his place upon the platform an associate can go forward without delay.

(2) *Lesson Study.* In schools where the uniform lesson is still followed in all or most departments, the superintendent should make himself thoroughly acquainted with the lesson for the coming session. As has been intimated, he should be prepared for any work expected of his teachers and scholars. He should be ready after the class study to give a practical summary of the teachings in the lesson, in a crisp, well-outlined talk, which will be aided by a blackboard illustration. And in the increasing number of schools which are employing graded lessons, not uniform in the departments, the superintendent should have at least a general knowledge of the subjects studied in each department. The more thoroughly the superintendent fills his own mind and heart with the truth, the more efficiently will the truth be taught in his school.

(3) *Social Duties.* The superintendent should know all his teachers, and, as far as possible, his scholars also. If it be practicable for him to visit teachers at their homes, the visitation will greatly increase his influence and his usefulness. If in his own home, or in the parlors of some family in the congregation, a social gathering of the teachers and officers can occasionally be held, it will add to the social power of the school. And in the social relations much can be accomplished before and after the church service, the school session, the prayer meeting, and the other gatherings of the congregation. There are superintendents who keep before them up-to-date lists of the classes, and by study of faces during the school session, with judicious inquiry, are able to call large numbers

of the scholars by name. Such greetings will strengthen the superintendent and heighten the loyalty of the school.

(4) *Seeking Workers.* In nearly all Sunday schools there is a constant need of helpers, to fill the places of withdrawing or absent teachers; and the work of supplying the demand generally falls upon the superintendent. He may find relief in the work of an associate superintendent, as will be seen in the next chapter. Both the superintendent and his associate should always be on the alert for new teachers and for new scholars. As the builder in stone looks at every fragment of rock, to see where it will best fit into his wall, so the whole-hearted superintendent studies every individual in the parish, to find exactly the place he may fill in the school, as an officer, a teacher, or a scholar; and not infrequently his search will be rewarded by a treasure.

(5) *Cabinet Meetings.* The superintendent should confer frequently with the several heads of departments, and with all the officers; talking with them freely about his own plans, and learning theirs, for the welfare of the school. It is not necessary that these cabinet meetings should be formal, having a secretary and a record. They may be held occasionally, for a few minutes after the session of the school, or as a social evening at a private house.

(6) *Special Days.* He should keep a calendar of special occasions in the school year, such as the Sundays set apart for temperance and for missions, Easter, Children's Day, Rally Day, Decision Day, Christmas, Promotion Day, and other notable

events. Weeks in advance of each occasion—in the case of some of them even months in advance—he should begin to consider what special exercises should be held, what preparation is needed, and who can best supervise the plans. For a fortnight before Children's Day or the Christmas celebration, many Sunday schools are in a turmoil of confusion, and lessons abandoned, simply because the superintendent did not take thought in sufficient time.

(7) *The Convention.* The Sunday-school work of the Christian world is now thoroughly organized in international, state, county, and town associations. Each school finds itself a part in a mighty movement; and it is the duty of the superintendent to see that his school takes its place in the Sunday-school army. He should see that in the institute and the convention his school is well represented; and if at all possible he should attend these gatherings, and be active in them. Many a worker who for most of the year is alone, burdened with perplexities, has been refreshed, has found his vision enlarged and his plans improved, by conference with other workers, and by listening to experienced specialists.

3. **His Duties in the School Session.** (1) *Present Early.* He should be at his post, if possible, from twenty minutes to half an hour before the opening of the school. However early he may arrive, he will probably find a group of children there in advance of him; and they will behave better if his eye is on them, especially if his glance is kind, and with it is a hand-shake or a word of recognition. The early superintendent will often

be surprised to find how much business in the interest of the school can be transacted before the session.

(2) *Open Promptly.* With his program ready, he should begin the session exactly on the minute, and should carry out every item according to the plan. If for any reason the superintendent is not at the desk when the moment for the opening arrives, the associate or first department superintendent should be empowered to call the school to order and begin the opening service.

(3) *Conduct Program.* The superintendent should conduct the general program of services; although it is advisable to recognize the associate and others, by calling upon them to take some part in the opening or closing services. A superintendent whose methods were always well chosen was wont once in each month to invite some official or prominent member of the church, who was not an attendant upon the school, to be present, sit upon the platform, and offer the prayer at the opening of the session. This kept the leading members of the church in closer relation to the school.

(4) *During the Lesson.* As a general principle, the superintendent should remain at his desk during the lesson period; but to this rule frequent exceptions will be made. The supply of substitutes for absent teachers, and the assignment of new scholars to classes, belong to the field of the associate superintendent.

(5) *Lesson Review.* In the Sunday schools which still follow the uniform system of lessons, studying the same portion of Scripture in all, or

nearly all, the grades of the school, the superintendent should give a brief practical summing up of the practical points in the lesson; but this review should not exceed five or six minutes in length. If the pastor possesses the gift of terse, crisp speaking, this practical talk may be given by him. In the schools adopting the graded courses of lessons this review should be given in each department by the department superintendent. Here again the adaptation to the point of view and needs of the pupils of each grade can be made much more effective than in the ungraded school.

(6) *Closing*. The superintendent should so carry out the program as to close the session at the time appointed. An hour and a quarter is as long as is profitable for the school; and everything that needs to be done can be brought into that space. Often much time is lost by unnecessary delays between the numbers on the program.

4. **Miscellaneous Duties.** Here are a few general suggestions, hints, and "don'ts" for the superintendent, briefly stated:

(1) *Notebook*. Let the superintendent remember to obtain that notebook, to keep it at hand, and to make use of it. Some pages at the end of the book might be reserved for special suggestions gathered from books, periodicals, and meetings.

(2) *Quiet*. Let him be careful not to make much noise during the session, but to set an example—which will soon be felt—in favor of quiet and orderly conduct. It is not at all certain that he needs a bell for calling attention; but if he uses one, let it be a little, gentle, quiet bell, held in the

hand as a signal, and never rung vociferously or repeatedly. Said a new superintendent as he tested the bell on Saturday before assuming office, "What a magnificent bell this would be for calling missionaries home from India!" But he never used it in the school. One of the best superintendents of a generation ago was widely known as "the silent superintendent." He was not deaf nor dumb, but his manner was noticeably quiet, and his large Sunday school was always in perfect order.

(3) *Early Lesson.* Let the opening service be short, so that the lesson period—which is the important part of the program—may be reached while the teachers and scholars are fresh and the air of the room is pure.

(4) *Use the Bible.* If a Scripture lesson is read by the superintendent and school responsively, it should be from the Bible upon the desk or in the hand of the leader, and not from a lesson quarterly. Encourage the use of the Bible as a text-book and for reference. If the superintendent always brings his own Bible, he can appeal to his teachers and scholars to follow his example. With regard to the Scripture reading in the opening service, it is the judgment of many thoughtful superintendents that even in a school following uniform lessons the reading should not be the lesson for the day, but a devotional portion of Scripture, perhaps a selection from the Home Readings of the week. It is a good plan for the first reading of the lesson for the day to be by the teacher and the class together.

(5) *Lesson Period.* No interruption should be allowed to break into the time assigned for class

study, except under imperative necessity. The teacher and the class should hold that period sacred to united study, without being diverted from their task by secretary, librarian, superintendent, or pastor. Said Bishop Vincent once, "I would like to have suspended from the roof of the Sunday-school hall a series of great glass half-globes, one for each class, to be dropped down over the class, and kept there during the time reserved for the study of the lesson!"

(6) *Speakers*. A visitor should rarely be invited or allowed to address the school; never, unless the superintendent has sufficient knowledge to be sure that he will speak briefly, interestingly, and pointedly. Before the uniform lesson concentrated the studies of the Sunday school it was the custom to invite almost any visitor to speak to the school; and many were the wrongs inflicted upon the boys and girls in those good old days by dull, loquacious Sunday-school orators. But almost everybody now understands that the Sunday school is a working institution, and its work must not be interrupted.

(7) *Self-control*. There will be times when the superintendent will need to be on guard over himself; times when he feels depressed, or melancholy, perhaps a little cross. If he yields to his natural impulses, the school will soon perceive the state of his nerves, and some scholars may even endeavor to add to his trials. At such times, let him watch over himself mightily, and resolve, no matter how he feels, to "keep sweet," to speak gently, and to look cheerful.

(8) *The Aim*. Lastly, one purpose should ever

stand before the superintendent, and should be the constant object of his endeavor—to lead all his scholars into a personal, vital relation to Jesus as the Christ, to bring them into union with the church, and to inspire them to enter upon active Christian service.

VIII

THE ASSOCIATE AND DEPARTMENT SUPERINTENDENTS

1. **The Necessity.** In every Sunday school there is need of an officer to aid the superintendent and to take his place when absent. Even in a small school the supervision can be more thorough and the teaching more efficient, if some one is at hand with authority to relieve the superintendent of minor details, and give him freedom for the general management. And in a large school assistants to the superintendent are an absolute necessity, for each department becomes in itself a school. There is need, therefore, of a general assistant to be the chief of staff to the superintendent, and, in a large and well-organized school, of a special assistant in each department.

2. **Titles.** Until recently, the assistant superintendent in most Sunday schools was merely one of the teachers named to take the place of the superintendent when absent, but with no duties when the head of the school was present. In the complete organization that is now becoming general, the office has been renamed, and its functions distinctly assigned. The chief assistant to the superintendent is now generally called the Associate Superintendent, a higher title for his important and regular duties. The chief of each department in the Sunday school is generally called Department Superintendent, that is, Primary Department

Superintendent, Senior Department Superintendent; and each department superintendent has the same relation to his department that the associate superintendent holds to the school.

3. **Appointment.** The associate superintendent should be nominated by the superintendent and confirmed by the board of teachers and officers. When two candidates are nominated for the office of superintendent, and one obtains a majority, it is not wise to elect the minority candidate as associate superintendent, unless he is entirely acceptable to the newly chosen superintendent. The chief executive of the school should not be compelled to find next to him a rival, who may be an uncongenial worker, to carry out plans with which the latter may not be in accord. In order to possess freedom in his policy the superintendent should choose his own chief helper; but he should receive the confirmation of his choice from his fellow workers in the school. The same plan of nomination and confirmation should be followed in the choice of the department superintendents. The associate and the department superintendents should constitute the superintendent's cabinet, to be called together often for consultation upon the interests of the school.

4. **Duties of the Associate Superintendent.** (1) *Not a Teacher.* Unless the school be small, with less than a hundred members, the associate superintendent should not at the same time be the regular teacher of a class. He will find other work to occupy his time, both before and during the session of the school. He may, however, hold himself ready to act as substitute for an absent teacher.

(2) *Deputy Superintendent.* If for any reason the superintendent is absent, his place should be taken promptly by the associate superintendent. It should also be understood that if at the moment of opening the school, or at any point in the general service, the superintendent is not on the platform, the associate shall act as his representative, without the slightest reflection upon the superintendent's administration, the two being regarded in their work as one.

(3) *Providing Substitutes.* One definite duty of the associate superintendent should be to provide substitutes for absent teachers, relieving entirely the superintendent from that burdensome and perplexing task. The teachers should permit no ordinary hindrance to keep them from their classes, for no one can fully supply the place of a true teacher in the regard of the scholars. But when a teacher finds it necessary to be absent he should make strenuous endeavor to find a substitute; and if unable to secure one, should notify, not the superintendent, but the associate; and before the lesson period the associate should have a supply ready.

If the school has been properly graded it will include a Teacher-training Class; but under no circumstances should the associate take one of its members as a supply teacher, even for one Sunday. This class should remain untouched by the demand for teachers until its members have completed the prescribed course. If there is a Reserve Class, substitutes should be called from it in some order, preferably alphabetical, so that the same members will not be taken too frequently.

Where the Sunday school is held in the afternoon or at noon, the associate can generally provide for needy classes by watching at the morning service for possible teachers. If he is compelled to look for them in the Adult or Senior classes of the school, he should be present early, and if possible obtain his supplies before the opening of the school. If the associate superintendent has done his work, when the lesson begins, every class will have a teacher seated before it, ready for the Bible study. He should never wait until the time for opening the lesson to see what classes need teachers, and then undertake to obtain them by interrupting the teaching in three or four classes and calling for volunteers, while the classes without teachers are listlessly waiting, and valuable time is lost from the half-hour of the lesson period. All this work should be done before the lesson, and, if possible, before the opening of the school.

(4) *Assignment of New Scholars.* Another duty of the associate superintendent is to meet new scholars and assign them to classes. For this work he should be present early, meet the scholars as they come, learn who the new scholars are, write down names, places of residence, ages, parents' names, why they come; and prepare material for the card catalogue under the secretary's care. Scholars bringing new members, and teachers into whose classes they may come, should introduce them to the associate superintendent, who should at once take charge of them. No new scholar below the grade of Senior should choose his own class, although his desire to be with friends should be considered, so far as it will not interfere

with the established system of classification. Some large graded schools have a temporary class to which new pupils in the Intermediate and Junior grades are assigned for a few sessions until their permanent place can be fixed.

(5) *Detailed Supervision.* There are also minor duties wherein the associate superintendent can be of great service. While the superintendent is at the desk directing the general exercises, his associate may be upon the floor, quietly observing the condition and needs of the school. He can note where Bibles, song books, or lesson quarterlies are needed, and can see that they are distributed without interrupting the service. He can also give quiet attention to the order of the school, calling to their duty boisterous, talking, or inattentive scholars. For the superintendent to stop in announcing a hymn or reading the Scripture, to rebuke some disorderly or thoughtless pupil, breaks into the service and mars its dignity. The associate superintendent can accomplish the desired result at the right moment by a light step and a gentle word.

(6) *Chief of Staff.* In a word, the associate superintendent should be the chief of staff to the executive head of the school, his eyes, ears, and hand; possessing full acquaintance and accord with his plans, and carrying them out in his name; informing and advising him, yet careful of criticism; avoiding all that would hinder, and aiding in all that would make his management successful. He can divide the labor, and relieve his chief of some of the most perplexing and trying details, leaving him free to watch over the general interests of the

school. Whoever can fulfill such a service is an invaluable worker, and should be held in high honor.

Many of the duties named above may be in the sphere of the department superintendent, who should be in his section what the associate superintendent is to the school.

IX

THE SECRETARY OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

1. **Importance.** The secretary of the Sunday school is an officer of far greater importance than is generally supposed. In too many schools some youth in the adolescent period is made secretary, merely to keep him in the school, without consideration of his capacity and adaptedness to the office. As a result of an unsuitable appointment, the minutes of the teachers' meetings are incomplete, the registry of the classes is neglected, and the true condition of the school cannot be ascertained. If by any good fortune or by a more careful choice an able and faithful secretary takes his place, at once a new impulse is felt by the school. The superintendent, the teachers, and even the scholars will realize that energy, accuracy, and thoroughness count for much in the work of this department. They will appreciate faithful service, and will themselves respond to its influence.

2. **Qualifications.** The ideal secretary of a Sunday school should possess the following characteristics:

(1) *A Business Man.* He should possess the instincts of a man of business, being willing to work, systematic in method, and thorough in care of details.

(2) *Regular in Attendance.* He should make the Sunday school his business on Sunday, with a fidelity equal to that which he manifests toward

his vocation through the week. His regularity should also embrace promptness, coming in advance of the hour; for much of the secretary's work may be done before the opening of the service.

(3) *Good Writer.* He should be able to write legibly, and possess skill in framing sentences correctly, and in writing them plainly, without unnecessary flourishes.

(4) *Quick Mental Action.* His mental processes should be sufficiently rapid for him to set down an ordinary motion, presented in a public meeting, without requiring it to be repeated or written out by the mover. An able recorder will promptly express in the minutes the form of a motion or the spirit of a speech, thereby saving much time in the meeting and much space in the report.

(5) *Quiet Manner.* The secretary should watch the program and do his work without interrupting it. He should never appear among the classes during prayer, during the reading of Scripture, or while a speaker is addressing the school. Only under urgent necessity should he come to a class in the lesson period, and in that case only at its beginning. During intervals in the service, or during the singing, he may find it needful at times to pass among the classes; but he should do this necessary work quietly, without distracting the attention of the school.

(6) *Courteous Conduct.* His bearing should always be that of a gentleman, refined and courteous, thoughtful of others and patient toward all; a manner enabling him to win the friendly aid of every teacher, upon whom the accuracy of the class record must depend.

Whoever can be found, in the school or the community, possessing these qualities, or approaching them, should be chosen as secretary of the Sunday school, whether man or woman. Often a young woman, accustomed through the week to business methods, becomes an efficient secretary of the Sunday school.

3. **Appointment.** The secretary should be elected by the board of officers and teachers. As he is not merely an assistant to the superintendent, but an officer of the school, it is not necessary that he should receive a nomination from the superintendent. His term of office should be one year, with as many reëlections as will promote the good of the service.

4. **Assistants.** In almost any school the secretary will need an assistant, whom he should nominate, subject to confirmation by the board of teachers and officers.

5. **Department Secretaries.** In a graded Sunday school there should be an assistant secretary for each department, who may be one of the teachers, or in the Senior and Adult grades, one of the scholars. He should take the records of the classes in the department and transmit them to the secretary of the school. But the secretary is responsible for the records of the entire school, and should see personally that the record of each department is complete.

5. **Duties.** The work of the secretary may be classified as follows:

(1) *Record of Meetings.* As secretary of the board of teachers and officers, he should be present at all business meetings and make a careful record.

Every motion should be stated clearly, with the names of its mover and its seconder, and the action taken. A statement should be given of every committee appointed, its purpose, and the names of its members. All committees should be expected to present written reports, however brief. A concise summary of each report, in a few sentences, or a single clause, should appear in the minutes of the meeting at which the report is presented; and the report itself should be filed for reference in case it should be needed. A committee once named is on the minutes, and cannot be ignored nor forgotten until its report has been presented and adopted, and the committee has been formally discharged. For example, it is not sufficient for the committee on the Christmas entertainment to hold the entertainment; it must afterward report that the entertainment was held on a certain date; must have its report adopted, and receive its discharge. It should be the duty of the secretary from time to time to call for reports of committees named in the minutes of previous meetings, to insist that a report be rendered, and that some action be taken upon it.

(2) *Record of the School.* In every well-ordered Sunday school the secretary summarizes in writing the attendance in each department, the total attendance, the number of new scholars, and other items to be preserved, including the weather, which may sometimes account for a small attendance; also a comparison with the record of the same Sunday last year. This report should be read to the school by the secretary at the call of the superintendent, or posted before the school;

and it should also be recorded in a book which will contain the statistics of the school through a term of years.

(3) *Records of Classes.* The secretary and his assistants should prepare the books in which the class record of attendance is recorded. The name of each scholar should be given correctly and fully (for example, not "F. Jones," but "Frederick Jones"). The secretary should see that the record of attendance for each Sunday is accurately kept. He will need to give special attention to classes where substitutes take the place of absent teachers, and to see that the record for the day is not neglected. As often as the arrangement of the class books requires the rewriting of the names of the scholars, he should transcribe the list, always writing every name in full. In looking through the class lists he should note the names of those who have been absent for a series of sessions, and should report them to the superintendent, for consideration and for investigation of every habitual absentee. If these scholars can be visited, many of them may be retained in the school.

(4) *Records of Scholars.* In addition to the record in the class books, another record should be kept of every member of the school, including every officer, teacher, and scholar; a card catalogue, each name upon a separate card, and all the cards filed in alphabetical order. The card for each scholar should give besides his name the date of his entrance to the school, either the date of his birth or his age at entering—approximative, if above eighteen years; his residence, with street and number in a city; parents' names; class to

which he is assigned; his relation to the church or congregation, and any other important facts. The card should contain the record of every promotion, and its date; of any changes in residence, and other details, so that it becomes a reliable and complete history of each individual in the school. In many schools the birthday of each member is kept upon the record, and is recognized by sending a birthday card. If a scholar or teacher leaves the school the fact is recorded, and the card is then taken from the regular catalogue and filed permanently in the list of "former members."

(5) *Literature of the School.* The secretary should be in charge of the literature used by the school, its text-books, lesson-quarterlies, and other periodicals. He should see that the literature is ordered in full time, should receive it, keep it in his care, and attend to its distribution. The particular text-book for each grade is fixed by the superintendent; and the secretary should receive from him direction as to the lesson helps for each grade.

(6) *Correspondence.* The secretary should conduct all correspondence in behalf of the school or of the teachers as a body, unless for a special purpose the chairman of a committee be in charge of correspondence relating to his work.

The secretary who with the aid of his staff undertakes to do all the work that rises before him will not find his task a light one. But his department carried on with vigor will greatly promote the success of the Sunday school.

X

THE TREASURY AND THE TREASURER

1. **In the Early Sunday School.** A study of origins has shown that in the earliest Sunday schools in America, as in England, provision was made for the payment of officers and teachers. In the first schools established in and near Philadelphia, each paid teacher had charge of what would now be considered a department, and the practical teaching was given under his direction by scholars, who were called monitors. But in a new country, where the settlements were small and the people mostly poor, the system of paid teachers soon passed away, and the schools were carried on by voluntary and unpaid workers. It was fortunate for the American Sunday school that in its beginnings it required but little money. For the place of meeting any chapel or schoolhouse or settler's cabin would serve. The literature was exceedingly meager—a few Testaments and spelling books, and generally these were brought by the teachers and scholars. When the earliest lesson books were published, they were not quarterlies, nor annuals, to be thrown away after one using, but were studied year after year. The largest item of expense was the library; and as this was an institution for the entire neighborhood, the families willingly contributed toward it. Not until the Sunday school had become thoroughly founded did the question of its financial support arise as a problem.

2. **In the Modern Sunday School.** As the Sunday school advanced in position, in influence, and in better methods of work, its expenses naturally increased. Now, in the opening of its second century, its financial requirements are far greater than they were even a generation ago. It asks for special and suitable buildings, with rooms and furnishings adapted to the educational needs of its several departments; for a periodical literature suited to teachers and scholars of every grade, and requiring to be renewed every year; for an organ or piano—often for several, with an orchestra added; for an equipment of song books different from those in the church service; for entertainments and gifts at Christmas, and a day's outing for all in the summer; for libraries containing popular books for the scholars and helpful works for the teachers in their work. The demands of a large and growing Sunday school, in city or country, are great, but in nearly all congregations the funds for the support of the Sunday school are obtained with less effort than those for any other department of church activity, and in this liberality the Christian people show their wisdom and insight.

3. **Practical Ways and Means.** The methods of financial support for the Sunday school are exceedingly varied. The simplest plan is through a regular weekly contribution in the classes. Where attention is given to the collection, and an appeal is occasionally made in its behalf, the school will generally obtain the funds needed for its own support. When the special need arises for the purchase of a piano or a library, some entertainment may be held which will by its profits swell

the receipts. The objection to these methods, which are almost universal, is that they appeal to self-interest, and fail to educate the members of the school in true liberality. It is for *our* school, *our* piano, *our* library, that the appeal is made and the money is contributed. The scholars should be taught to give to the cause of Christ and his gospel, and not merely to interests from which they themselves are to receive a reward.

4. **The Ideal Way of Giving.** The more excellent way is for the church in its annual estimate of expenses to include a fair, even liberal, allowance for the Sunday school, and at intervals through the year pass over to the treasury of the Sunday school the funds appropriated, to be expended according to principles and regulations provided. Then let every officer, teacher, and pupil in the school, from the Adult Department to the Primary, and even to the Beginners, make his own weekly offering to the church. Most church schools contribute to the cause of foreign missions; but there is equal reason why they should give to all the general benevolent objects for which the church receives an annual collection. This plan would unite the church and the school more firmly, would avoid multiplying and conflicting objects for which funds are raised, and, best of all, would train every child in the Sunday school to systematic giving upon the true gospel principle, which is "not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

5. **The Sunday-School Treasurer.** The work of the treasurer is very different from that of the secretary; yet the two offices are often held by one person. In that case they should be regarded

as distinct positions; the election to the two offices should be separate, and not at the same time for one person as secretary and treasurer. At every business meeting a separate report should be presented for the two departments, and the treasurership should not be regarded as a branch of the secretary's work. If the plan outlined in the last paragraph be adopted as the method of providing for the financial needs of the Sunday school, it might be well to choose the treasurer of the church as treasurer of the Sunday school, thus giving unity to the financial administration of the entire organization.

6. The Treasurer's Work. This will require a person who is known as careful in accounts, as well as honorable in all his dealings.

(1) *His Charge.* All the funds of the Sunday school should pass through his hands. If money is raised for any purpose, or a money-making entertainment is held, the treasurer should take charge of the receipts and pay the bills. For this purpose he should be ex officio a member of all committees required to receive and disburse funds.

(2) *Bank Account.* Except in small and remote places, the treasurer will find it desirable to keep an account with a bank in behalf of the school, and deposit therein all moneys received. Under no circumstances should he deposit Sunday-school funds as a part of his own private account, but should keep separate accounts as an individual and as treasurer.

(3) *Reports and Vouchers.* At each meeting of the governing board of the school he should present a statement of the condition of the treasury,

with exact mention of all moneys received and paid since the last meeting; and for every payment he should show a receipt or voucher, and on it the "O. K." or approval of some qualified person who knows that it is correct.

(4) *Bills*. He should receive all bills against the school, and should inform himself concerning them, in order to be able to answer any questions raised by members of the board. He should present at the meeting a statement of all the unpaid bills on hand, with a forecast of bills expected, and obtain a vote of the board upon each bill that is to be paid.

(5) *Checks*. It is desirable to pay bills as far as possible with checks, as the check will often serve as a receipt; and the receipted bills should be filed together for reference.

(6) *Audits*. An Auditing Committee should be appointed, to examine the accounts of the school from time to time, and always when the treasurer completes his term, alike whether he is reëlected or gives place to a successor. This committee should either present a written report, or should sign their names to the treasurer's report, with the indorsement, "Audited and found correct."

Most of the above recommendations, perhaps all of them, state the methods that would be followed by any intelligent, businesslike treasurer. But in the continent-wide area of the Sunday school, of necessity, not all treasurers are intelligent or experienced in business methods; and there are doubtless many who may profit by these suggestions.

(7) *Study of Benevolent Interests*. One of the most important duties of a treasurer in a modern

Sunday school is to study the different charitable objects that present themselves to the school, decide upon their merits, and then present them understandingly to the members of the school, with a view to eliciting their interest and training them in the spirit and habit of intelligent giving. This important task raises the treasurership out of mere mechanical service, and constitutes it one of the directing forces in the school.

XI

VALUE OF THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL LIBRARY

1. **The Library of the Past.** Until quite recent times the Sunday-school library was understood to be a collection of books, mainly of an entertaining character, kept in the school, distributed at its sessions, and read by the scholars, for enjoyment rather than for instruction. Such a library was regarded as an essential of the Sunday school. However small or however poor the school, it must have a library. Books were scarce, and desirable books were high in price. There were no free public libraries, and few circulating libraries. The library was regarded as the principal attraction of the school, and it drew the scholars. Many children attended two Sunday schools in order to obtain each week two library books. The books were read by all the family; and in many homes the Sunday-school library furnished most of the reading matter. The literature may not have been of the highest grade, but, with all its defects, the Sunday-school library of the past was a useful and valuable institution.

2. **Its Decline in the Present.** In recent times, and especially in well-settled and cultured communities, the Sunday-school library has lost much of its importance. Very many schools have closed their libraries; and in the schools continuing their use only a small proportion of the scholars obtain books. Inquiry has shown that in cities and

suburban towns a school of two hundred members will include not more than thirty who make use of the library. When the library is closed scarcely any complaints from the scholars are heard; nor is the closing of the library followed by a loss of scholars. Publishing houses which formerly issued fifty new books each year, especially for Sunday-school libraries, have entirely abandoned this branch of business. It cannot be maintained that the Sunday-school library for the entertainment of the scholars now holds a prominent place, or is a factor of success, in the best American Sunday schools.

3. **Causes of Decline.** It is not difficult to find reasons for this present lack of interest in the Sunday-school library. Books are now far more abundant than they were formerly. They are sold cheaply, and are to be found in almost every home. The periodical literature in circulation to-day is apparently a hundredfold greater than it was two generations ago. Every city and almost every town has its public library. Many schools are furnished with free libraries. Readers can scarcely find time for the books and magazines that are open to them. Moreover, the Sunday school now stands in such recognized honor and power that it no longer needs the old-time library as a bait for scholars. The library for mere recreation does not readily fit into the general scheme of education in the modern Sunday school. Then, too, the educational work of the school demands such an outfit of books and periodicals, renewed each year, that the additional expense of the library is a heavy burden. Sharp criticism is

passed upon the quality of the books in most Sunday-school libraries, as being almost wholly stories, and stories of a cheap and commonplace character, many of them absolutely injurious. The conducting of the library is often found to interfere with the order and work of the school. These are among the causes which have led to disuse of the library in many Sunday schools.

4. **The Uses of a Good Library.** Notwithstanding the objections to the Sunday-school library, its neglect by many scholars, and its abolition in many schools, the fact remains that the majority of Sunday schools still retain the library, and claim that it is needed. There are even places where the Sunday-school library holds its own constituency in competition with the town library; and in small villages the Sunday school supplies most of the books in circulation. The principal claims made in behalf of such a library are the following:

(1) *Family Needs.* Every family needs good reading matter. The books that interest the young generally interest the old also. People who would be at a loss to select a book from the shelves of a public library will read the book brought to them from the Sunday-school library. The reading of the library-book fills leisure time on Sunday afternoons and on long winter evenings.

(2) *Moral Influence.* While most Sunday-school books as literature are open to criticism, yet in the realm of ethics they generally present high ideals. The characters depicted in them may not be symmetrical, but on the whole they are earnest and upright. Youth admires heroism; and the

personalities portrayed in popular Sunday-school books are generally heroic, even though they may be unduly emotional. The boys who are picked up by the police in railroad centers, armed for fighting Indians or robbing trains, generally carry an assortment of cheap novels, but they are not from Sunday-school libraries. If the criterion be ethics and not literature, most Sunday-school books will stand the test.

(3) *Aid to the School.* As has been already suggested, the original aim of the library was to attract scholars to the school. In many places this influence is no longer needed; but there still remain communities where scholars are obtained and families are interested by means of the library. And it is an open question whether if the library had advanced step by step with the other departments of the school, if the same attention had been given to the supply and management of the library as has been given to the educational work, if the right books had been kept upon its shelves, and advanced methods had been sought in their distribution, the library of the Sunday school might not still be a vigorous and successful institution.

5. Principles of Selection. If the governing board of the school decides that a library for general reading by the scholars is desirable, the question at once arises as to what principles shall determine the selection of books. A few of these principles may be stated:

(1) *Variety.* The library should represent more than one department of literature. So general is the taste for stories that the tendency will be

inevitable to overload the library with works of fiction. Therefore special care should be given to include in it the lives of great and good men—heroes, statesmen, explorers, leaders of the church, and missionaries. All of these present life on its romantic side, and may be found written in an entertaining manner. Upon the shelves should also be placed history and science—not in many-volumed treatises for scholars, but in popular books for young people. In fact, there are few departments of a good public library which may not properly be included in the library of the Sunday school, especially in places where the school is expected to supply the reading matter for the community.

(2) *Popularity.* Merely to place books on the shelves of a Sunday-school library will not insure the reading of them. This library aims to be emphatically a circulating library. Its books are not for show, but for use; and their place to be seen is not on the shelves of the library-room, but in the homes of the scholars and teachers. It is absolutely essential that no book be placed in the library unless it is sufficiently interesting to be taken out and read, for an unread book is worse than useless in the Sunday-school library. Although its principles be as sound as the Ten Commandments, if it be dull it must be condemned. Students may be willing to plod through an uninteresting book because it is profitable, but ordinary readers, especially youthful readers, will turn from it. Books should not be purchased because they are good, or because they are cheap; nor, on the other hand, should they be chosen only because they are

popular; yet an interesting, popular quality should be an absolute requirement in every book placed upon the library shelves.

(3) *Literary Quality.* Books are influential teachers, and a style like that of Hawthorne or Eliot will unconsciously mold the language of those who read it. On the other hand, the habitual readers of the slang in the comic paragraph of the newspaper will talk in a careless and inelegant manner. Of course, all books should be excluded from the library which deal in low, profane, or immoral language, without regarding the specious plea that such describe life as it is. We do not need to learn the language of the slums to know life; and, as one writer has said, we do not want a realism that can be touched only with a pair of tongs. The best pirate story in the English language is one that is without an oath from cover to cover,¹ and we would not exclude it from the Sunday-school library. Let us seek for writers whose expression is direct, smooth, and cultured. The Sunday school in its literature as well as its teaching should lead upward toward refinement of taste.

(4) *Moral Teaching.* The ethical standard of every book in the Sunday-school library should be of the highest. Not that every paragraph should end with the application like the *Hæc fabula docet* of Æsop's fables, or that the characters in a story should be of a "goody-goody" kind, or that none but good people should appear upon the page. There must be some shadows in the perspective that the light may stand in contrast. But in no

¹ R. L. Stevenson's *Treasure Island*.

case should wrong, or sin, or the doubtful moralities of modern society be made attractive. Moral problem stories, in which the boundary lines of right and wrong conduct are crossed and re-crossed until right seems wrong, and wrong seems right, should have no place. "Should love stories be admitted?" Not if the element of love enters as the dominant thought of the book. A story should not be forbidden because there is a pair of lovers in it; but it should not be accepted if the book shows no higher motive than to set forth their passion. Books should be sought that will inculcate a noble manliness for young men and a noble womanliness for young women, and there are such books in numbers sufficient to fill the library shelves.

(5) *Christian Spirit.* It is not required that every book should set forth and illustrate a spiritual experience. It may be religious without preaching religion. But the morals it inculcates should be founded upon the gospels and inspired by faith. It should be reverent in its treatment of the Bible, of the church, and of the ministry. A book or a story designed to weaken belief in the Scriptures as records of the divine will, or holding the church up to scorn, or showing a minister as its villain, should be kept out of the Sunday-school library. Criticism or discussion of the Bible, of the church, and of the ministry has its place, but its place is not in the Sunday school. The Sunday school is distinctively a religious and a Christian institution, and the atmosphere of the Christian religion should pervade its library.

6. **The Coming Sunday-School Library.** Another

library of a higher type than that designed for the reading and recreation of the scholars is now arising to notice in many advanced Sunday schools, and is destined to become the Sunday-school library of the future, either supplementing the library of the past or taking its place. It is the library which is to the Sunday school what the college library is to the college, a workshop equipped with tools for the use of the teacher and the scholar. It will be at once a reference library, containing the best Bible dictionaries, cyclopedias, expository works, and gospel harmonies, open at certain times for the use of students; and also a lending library of books upon the Bible, upon the Sunday school, upon teaching, upon religion, upon character, and upon the varied forms of social service which are now calling for workers, and will call yet more imperatively in the coming years. The books for this library must be chosen with wisdom; for they should represent the results of the best scholarship, yet be expressed in language that the nonprofessional reader can understand; and many of them must be for the scholars, who are of all ages and all degrees of intelligence. Those of the Primary Department should be able to find in such a library the stories of the Bible told in such a fascinating manner that a child too young to read them may listen to them with interest, and picture-books illustrating the events, the people, the dress, and the landscape of the Bible. It should be planned to meet the needs of every grade in the Sunday school, and to aid every teacher and every scholar; and when established it should be made effective in the educational

work of the school. Just as in the secular school and the college students are sent to the library with directions as to the books they will need, so in the Sunday school teachers will be able to counsel their scholars and to give them week-day work, so that the teaching will be more than the talk of the teacher; it will embrace the results of searching on the part of the scholar. Under the system of uniform lessons the use of such a library was well-nigh impracticable, because every class would need the same books at one time. But the uniform lessons are being rapidly displaced by the graded system, giving to each grade its own series of lessons; and this method, requiring different books for each age in the school, will open the way for reference work and study in the library. The time is at hand when such a working library will become a necessity in every well-organized school.

7. The Public Library and the Sunday School.

It would seem that wherever the public library is free, available, and well conducted some arrangement might be effected whereby the Sunday-school libraries could be united with the public library. This would lessen expense and difficulty in management, would avoid the unnecessary reduplication of copies of the same books, and would give to the scholars at once a wider selection and the advantage of the open shelf. In more than one town this has been accomplished. The Sunday schools have transferred all their libraries to the public library, to its enlargement, and with no loss of members to the schools. Some Sunday schools in cities have been recognized as branch stations of the public library, giving them the

benefit of frequent changes in the equipment of books, which at regular intervals are selected from the store of the public library by the library committee of the school. The working library for teachers and scholars, proposed in the last paragraph, in many places might be established in the public library, wherever the schools in the community will unite to show that it is needed, to name the books required, and to make it practically useful.

XII

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE LIBRARY

I. **Library Committee.** For the selection of books, whether in the reading library for scholars or the working library for teachers and scholars, a wise, intelligent, and careful committee should be chosen, and should be maintained in permanent service. The pastor and the superintendent should be ex-officio members of this committee, but it should also include some other persons sufficiently acquainted with books to pass upon their merits, and willing to give time, inquiry, and thought to the library. There may be schools fortunate in possessing librarians who devote themselves to the selection of books, as well as to the care of them; and in such schools the library committees will find their labors lessened. No book should be admitted to the library without examination and approval by the committee.

(1) *Purchase of Books.* The simplest method for finding books is far from being the best method. It is to have a quantity of books—a hundred or more at one time—sent by booksellers on approval. This method involves hasty examination, and generally results in obtaining many useless, worthless books intermixed with a few good ones. The better plan is for the committee, first of all, to be supplied with catalogues from reputable publishers of books for children and young people, and also books on religious and biblical education; next to

read carefully the reviews of books in these departments as given in the best literary and religious periodicals; then, to send only for such books as they judge will be desirable, receiving them on approval. Every book should not only be looked at, but read; and if at all doubtful read by more than one member of the committee. In some Sunday schools there is placed at the door a library box, in which may be deposited the names of books desired by members of the school. Lists of approved books are published by various houses and societies; and the catalogues of a few good Sunday-school libraries will aid committees. The library committee must scrutinize closely all donations of books offered to the library, and resolutely decline every book that is unsuitable, even at the risk of offending the donor. The Sunday-school library room must not be turned into a mausoleum for dead volumes. The committee must also beware of bargains offered by some booksellers who would unload upon Sunday schools their left-over and unsalable stock. That which costs little is generally worth less. The Sunday school must obtain only books that will be read and are worth reading.

(2) *Frequent Additions.* The usual method is to use the old library until its best books are either worn out or lost, and then to make a strenuous effort at raising money for the purchase of an entirely new collection. But the better plan is to add a few carefully selected books each month to the library. To examine at one time two hundred volumes is an impossibility, and in so large a purchase many undesirable books are sure to be

included. It is not difficult to select after careful examination ten books each month, and thereby keep the library always at a high grade of excellence. With each purchase a slip describing the new books might be printed, and distributed to the school, thus keeping the library constantly before its patrons.

2. **The Librarian.** There is a close analogy between the work of the librarian in the public library and that in the Sunday school. For the public library everywhere a specialist is sought, one who knows books, can select them wisely, and can aid seekers after literature in their reading. The Sunday school needs just such a librarian, and all the more because the scholars cannot select from the open shelf, but must guess at the quality of a book from its title in the catalogue. It has been noticed that wherever a Sunday-school library is successful in holding the interest of the scholars there is found with it a librarian adapted to his work and devoting himself to it. We notice the characteristics of a good librarian in the Sunday school:

(1) *A Bookman.* He is a lover of books, acquainted with them, and interested in good literature. His work is more than to distribute books: he should aid, sometimes supervise, their collection.

(2) *A Business Man.* He is practical, orderly, and systematic in his ways of working; with a plan for his task, and fidelity in accomplishing it.

(3) *Gentle in Manner.* Opportunities will be frequent for the librarian to clash with the scholars on the one hand, or with the superintendent upon

the other. With one he may appear arbitrary, with the other disorderly, his work sometimes breaking into the program of exercises. He should be pleasant toward all, uniform in his dealings, and attentive to the general order of the school.

3. **His Assistants.** In most schools one assistant, in large schools several assistants, will be required by the librarian. He should nominate them, subject to the approval of the governing board of the school; and should require of them regular and prompt attendance, and attention to their work in the library. It is very desirable that the business should be so arranged as to allow the librarians to take part in the opening devotional service with the school, and not to be at work arranging books while others are at prayer.

4. **The Management of the Library.** This involves four processes: the collection, the assignment, the distribution, and the return of the books.

(1) *The Collection.* The books can easily be collected without interfering with the order of the school, if the library window is near the entrance to the building, and the scholars as they enter leave their books at the library. This is the method employed in most schools.

(2) *The Assignment.* How to enable each scholar to choose his book introduces one of the three problems in library management. The plan generally followed is to supply each scholar with a card bearing a number which represents the scholar. He selects from the catalogue a large assortment of books, and writes their numbers upon his card: the librarian assigns the scholar any one of the books selected, crosses it from his list,

and upon another list marks the number of the book opposite the number of the scholar. The weakness of the plan is in the fact that the scholar has no means of learning from the catalogue what books are desirable; and a book desired by one may be entirely undesirable to another. Theoretically the scholar has the whole catalogue from which to choose; practically he has no choice, except the suggestion in the titles of the books. The open-shelf plan cannot be established in the Sunday school, for the room is usually too small, the time of the session is too brief, and the work of the school too important to allow interruption.

In some graded Sunday schools another plan is pursued, taking from the scholar all choice, but assigning to each grade books of certain numbers, all printed upon the card of the scholar, any one of which books he may receive at any time during his stay in the grade, but each of which will fall to his lot but once. This plan demands a library of books carefully selected, and as carefully fitted to each grade in the school. But this method is apt to be unsatisfactory to the scholars, who have their own preferences among the books. The difficulties in assigning books, and disappointments of scholars in failing to obtain the books desired, is a frequent cause for the disuse of the library; and this problem has not as yet been fully solved.

(3) *The Distribution.* This takes place at the close of the school, and brings in the second problem of library management. The books may be brought to the classes by the librarians, and distributed by the teachers; each scholar's book being indicated by his card placed within it. This

method often causes confusion; scholars being dissatisfied with their books and leaving their classes press around the library. Sometimes they exchange books with each other. This is a simple plan as far as the two scholars exchanging are concerned, but sure to make trouble in the record of the librarian. Or each class may be dismissed in turn, and obtain its books at the library window while passing out. But this plan causes a congestion of scholars at the library, and also requires much time. To manage the distribution of books demands a strong will, coupled with a gentle manner in maintaining the library rules.

(4) *The Return.* The theory of the Sunday-school library is that each scholar will bring his book back after a week or two weeks. But boys and girls—sometimes older scholars also—are apt to be careless. Books are exchanged between scholars, are loaned from one home to another, are forgotten, and are lost. And the books lost most readily are frequently those that are most sought for by the scholars. How to induce scholars invariably to return their books constitutes the third problem of library management. In many schools the percentage of lost books is exceedingly large. The librarian should do his utmost to reduce the loss to a minimum. To this end a few suggestions may be given:

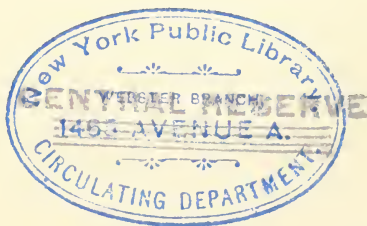
(a) *Record of Scholars.* Every scholar's name and address, with his library number, should be kept on record in the library; and every effort should be made to make the record conform to all changes in residence.

(b) *Record Sheet.* The library should contain a

record sheet, showing the number of every book issued, and the number of the scholar receiving it; to be canceled when the book is returned. This will show who is responsible for every book out of its place from the library.

(c) Fines. A fine should be assessed upon the scholar for every book kept over time; and notice sent to the scholar at his home when a fine has become due.

(d) Rewards. Scholars should be paid a reward, perhaps of ten cents for each book, if they can succeed in tracing and finding any book which has been out of the library two months or more. These plans, or others, may lessen, but no plan will entirely remove, the evil of books lost to the library through neglect or a worse crime.



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